

54. *Otitis checked by pressure on the common carotid.*—Mr. MEUNIS has succeeded in one case, in his own person, in checking inflammation of the ear by pressure on the carotid. The auricle was hard, swollen, and painful; the meatus externus narrowed; and the pain increasing. Acting upon the principle of diminishing the contents of the dilated vessels, Mr. M. compressed with his finger the common carotid against the bodies of the cervical vertebrae, when the pain was instantly removed. The pressure was continued for about fifteen minutes, and upon removing his finger he was delighted to find that the pain did not return.—*London Med. Gaz.*, July 9, 1836.

55. *Strictures of the urethra treated with bougies coated with burnt alum.* *La Lancette Française* of the 3d of May last contains some observations on a new means proposed by M. JOBERT for the treatment of strictures of the urethra. This means consists in the application of calcined alum made into a paste with oil, and introduced in small portions into the urethra by means of a bougie; this instrument being also coated with the same medicament, by first oiling it and then rolling it in the powdered calcined alum. Two cases are recorded, which after resisting the ordinary treatment, yielded to this means.

56. *Treatment of Orchitis by compression.*—Having found local bleedings, cataplasms, frictions, &c. to be ineffectual in the treatment of inflammations of the testicle, Dr. Fricke has had recourse to compression after the following manner.

The patient is placed against a wall, or on the edge of a sofa, so as to let the scrotum hang, the hair having been shaved off. The surgeon takes the scrotum in one hand, and separates the healthy from the diseased testicle, and with the other hand stretching upwards the skin that covers the diseased organ. If the testicle be very large he has it held by an assistant, if the swelling is not considerable, there is no need of assistance. In the same manner he separates the spermatic cord, and applies round it a bandage (an inch broad, and an ell long,) covered with adhesive plaster, to within an inch of the testicle, over this he applies a second bandage in the same way. These bandages require much precaution in their application, they must embrace the cord tightly, that the testicle may not slip up near the abdominal ring, particularly when its inferior extremity comes to be bandaged, which would render the operation not only painful but useless. These two bandages being applied, the application of others is to be continued from above downwards in the direction of the large extremity of the testicle, taking care that each turn of the bandage overlaps one third of the under one; when the large extremity of the testicle is arrived at, it is no longer possible to use circular bandaging. The surgeon then seizes the part where the first turns of the bandage were applied, and applies the bandages longitudinally to the tumour, going round the bottom of the testicle, and securing above the ends of the bandage. As many are to be applied as will cover the whole testicle; this compression must be graduated, and the best proof the bandage being applied properly, is the cessation of pain. If both testicles be diseased, one of them is to be treated in the manner above mentioned, and when the operation is completed, the second testicle is to be bandaged to the first, making the longitudinal bandages act as and upon one testicle only. After the compression is finished the patient may walk about his room.—*Dublin Journ.* and *Zeitschrift für die Gesamte Medicin.*

## MIDWIFERY.

57. *Absorption of the Placenta.*—Professor NAEGELE, some years since published three cases, (see Vol. iv. p. 244 of this Journal,) which seem to authorize the belief that the placenta, when retained after the delivery of the child, is sometimes absorbed by the uterus; and four cases since recorded, two of them in the practice of Dr. Gützenberger of Heidelberg, one in that of Dr. Salomon of Leyden, (see Vol. iv. p. 245 of this Journal,) and one in that of Dr. Gabillot of Lyons, (see Vol. v. p. 530 of this Journal,) lead considerable countenance, if they do not indeed entirely confirm, the truth of such a conclusion. Mnd. Boivin, however,

denies that these facts are sufficiently convincing to authorize a belief in the occurrence of the phenomenon alluded to, and asserts that the writers just mentioned were misled in consequence of there being some malformation of the placenta, which prevented their recognising this body, when expelled.

The *Archives Générales* for May last, contains an interesting memoir on this subject by M. MASLIEURAT-LAGÉMAR,\*, in which the cases we have noticed are quoted, with the objections of Mad. Boivin to the conclusions drawn from them, and the invalidity of these objections are fully shown, and the absorbent powers of the internal surface of the uterus entirely established. M. M. endeavours, indeed, to show that not only may the placenta be absorbed, but even the soft parts of the dead fœtus, so as to leave nothing but the skeleton. The principal novelty, however, in the memoir of M. M., is a case which he has observed under the cure of M. Paul Dubois, in the *hôpital de la clinique d'accouchement*, in which a portion of the placenta left in the uterus was absorbed.

The subject of this case was a seamstress, 36 years of age, delivered 8th of January at full term, of a first child, the labour natural, a first head presentation, the umbilical cord of the usual size and length. A short period after the expulsion of the fœtus, the patient was attacked with colic, followed by such alarming hæmorrhage, as to require the introduction of the hand for the extraction of the placenta; but this latter body adhered so firmly to the uterus, that M. Dubois was able to extract only a portion. This manœuvre stopped the bleeding for a short time, after which it returned as violently as before, when the hand was again introduced and a small portion of the placenta taken away. The bleeding then ceased, but a second relapse rendered it again necessary to pass the hand into the uterus; at least one-fourth of the placenta however remained, in spite of these repeated efforts to remove it. For the first few days no unpleasant symptom occurred; but on the seventh day a large clot of blood came away and was followed by hæmorrhage, sufficiently violent to bring on fainting. The lochia have a slightly fetid odour. On the ninth day, repetition of the hæmorrhage, which was less violent, and did not follow but preceded the expulsion of the coagula. From this time no occurrence of note presented, and the woman left the hospital on the 6th of February, in good health.

This woman was watched with the greatest care. Her linen was put apart and carefully examined every morning, by M. Dubois himself, who was unable to discover any trace of placenta, either in the lochia, or the two coagula discharged on the seventh and ninth days. These coagula were not only cut, but they were placed in clear water, and nothing could be discovered different from the ordinary appearances of coagula.

A case of similar character to the above has been communicated to us by Dr. Lindly of Washington, and will appear in our next number.

58. *Secale cornutum in after-pains.* Dr. HOFFMAN in the *Berlin Med. Zeit.* (29 June, 1836,) recommends the *secale cornutum* as very efficacious for the relief of after-pains. He gives it in the dose of 5 grains every two hours, with some powdered cinnamon. The pains and hæmorrhage are at first increased, but soon diminish, and then disappear altogether.

We have resorted to the venous tincture of ergot, in some cases of after-pains, especially where coagula were retained in the uterus, with decided relief.

59. *Extraction of a live child by the operation of turning after the mother's death.*—Mrs. H. 41 years of age, was frequently subject to accidents depending on plethora. Her first seven children were born without any accident: pregnant, for the eighth time in 1822; she lost the fœtus by abortion. Towards the fourth month of her ninth pregnancy, symptoms of congestion towards the head set in, and on the eighth month she began to complain of pain about the sacrum, with loss of motion in the right lower extremity. These accidents were soon joined by pain in the head and vertigo, which were a little relieved by general bleeding.

\* We observe with some surprise that in the reprint of the *Archives* in the *Encyclopédie des Sciences Médicales*, published at Bruxelles, this memoir is wholly omitted.

On the 25th of April, 1834, at mid-day, the first pains set in, and the membranes gave way at about 10 o'clock in the evening; the mobility now immediately became modified, and evidently weaker; the patient complained of excessive pressure about the forehead, anxiety and oppression. These accidents were worse on the following day; the face assumed a dark red colour. On the 26th, at mid-day, the patient barely answered any questions put to her, saying merely yes, when asked if she felt any pain, and pointing to the head. The pulse was now full and hard; venesection was had recourse to, and 16 ounces of blood extracted at 6 o'clock in the evening. Convulsive motions of the muscles of the face and extremities, however, soon appeared, and in a quarter of an hour after the bleeding the woman expired. A physician called in on the spot, found the head of the child presenting, but too high up in the pelvis for the application of the forceps. He immediately introduced his hand into the uterus, and, in a quarter of an hour after the mother's death, and twenty hours after the rupture of the membranes, extracted a male infant in an apparent state of death. The ordinary means were sufficient to excite the circulation in about five minutes, and the child, which was full-grown and well-formed, has since continued well.—*Berlin Med. Zeit.* July 6, 1836.

### MEDICAL JURISPRUDENCE AND TOXICOLOGY.

60. *Dangers from certain Cosmetics.*—The public seem not to be sufficiently aware of the danger incurred by the use of many of the cosmetics sold for drying the hair. One of the numbers of the *Annales d'Hygiène et de Med légale* of last year, contains some interesting cases in which very disastrous effects followed the employment of these preparations. A young lady of 18, who used the powder of iris (*Iris germanica*) to her hair, was attacked with convulsions and delirium, from which she did not entirely recover for three months. Two similar cases were communicated to the Academy of Medicine by M. Aumont.

M. Deleschamps has recorded in the *Journ. de Chem. Med.*, t. vii., the case of a young lady who resorted to the Persian Wash\* to dye her hair black. The result was that her hair was not entirely blackened, but many parts of the skin took this colour, and the lady became a prey to headaches.

Butini asserts that he has known acute meningitis caused by the nitrate of silver applied to the hair.

61. *Oxide of Zinc, an antidote to Belladonna.*—In July, 1835, a mare, aged nine years, belonging to the Marquis de Spinetto, accidentally swallowed half an ounce of the extract of belladonna. Washes, camphorated spirits of wine, &c. were immediately applied without success. The nervous system was greatly affected; the animal being attacked with palpitations and difficult respiration. In this condition Dr. Cuvotri prescribed three ounces of oxide of zinc to be taken in four doses during the day. In twelve hours the symptoms had disappeared. On the 5th day they again showed themselves, but were removed by the administration of a scruple of the medicine. Should this prove equally effectual in the human subject, the discovery will be an important one.—*Journ. de Chim. Med.*

### PHARMACEUTIC CHEMISTRY.

62. *Concin.* According to the experiments of Geiger, Christison, Charlard, and Henry, is an oily liquid of a yellowish colour. It is completely soluble in ether and alcohol, and is lighter than water which dissolves a small portion of it. Its smell is strong, resembling that of the hemlock, or tobacco, or mice. Its taste is very nerid and corrosive. It proves fatal to animals in very small doses and with

\* This is a solution of 10 grs. nit. argent. in one oz. of water.